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STATINTL

The Washington Merry-Go-Round

K's Troubles and McNamara's

By Drew Pearson

Observers who have come back from Moscow compare Premier Khrushchev's troubles with his Red army generals as not unlike those Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara is having with U. S. military men.

The friction which led to the purge of Admiral George Anderson as Chief of Naval Operations actually began last October during the Cuban crisis, when Anderson wanted to let each U. S. commander operate on his own in Cuban waters when it came to stopping Russian ships.

President Kennedy and Secretary McNamara overruled him. They felt that the situation was too tense to let the fate of the United States rest in the hands of individual naval officers. One false move, they said, could plunge the world into war.

Admiral Anderson believed that his commanders were cool, level-headed and well trained to meet emergencies; that they should not have to query Washington, 1000 miles away, on every move.

However, the White House and the Defense Department

kept a minute-to-minute control over the tense Cuban blockade, as Russian vessels steamed toward Havana.

Khrushchev's Trouble

In Moscow, at about the same time, Khrushchev was having serious troubles with his military men. There has been some ground for believing that it was the Red army that urged the placing of nuclear missiles in Cuba in the first place. But whether true or not, there is no doubt that Marshal Malinovsky, No. 1 power in the Red army, was furious when Khrushchev removed them.

It was shortly after this that Malinovsky made the unusual criticism of Khrushchev's role at the battle of Stalingrad, where Khrushchev had served as civilian commissar. Khrushchev recently has been given chief credit for the Stalingrad victory. Marshal Malinovsky, in a public statement, played down Khrushchev's role, said that the decisions of the Russian general staff had won the victory.

This was equivalent to a statement by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington that John F. Kennedy was not much of a hero in the PT boat rescue in the South Pacific.

Shortly after this, Marshal Malinovsky went to Indonesia. While he was absent, Khrushchev removed Marshal Matvei Zakharov as chief of

staff of the Red army, replacing him with Marshal Sergei Biryuzov, a rocket expert, and a man closer to Khrushchev's ideas against big land armies.

Admiral Anderson, a handsome, rough-and-ready sailor, was dropped shortly after his return from a Navy League conference in Puerto Rico where he had made a fairly innocuous speech on the importance of mutual trust between superior and inferior officers, but which was interpreted by some as the last straw in the feud between the military and the civilian leaders of the Pentagon.

There had been other irritating factors, such as differences between McNamara and the military over the TFX contract and the tendency of some admirals and generals to run up to Congress with private views in direct conflict with their civilian chiefs.

NOTE—Now that Anderson has been dropped, furious naval officers are planning a private campaign to make him a hero. They recall the manner in which President Truman disciplined Admirals Arthur Radford and Arleigh Burke when they went to Congress in an attempt to undermine another Secretary of Defense, Louis Johnson, for cutting defense spending by pruning big airplane carriers. Truman was irate at this undercutting of the civilian command, but President Eisenhower brought both Rad-

ford and Burke back to Washington and restored them as kingpins of the Navy.

The Battle in Russia

Just how deep runs the Red army battle against Khrushchev is hard to determine. Another top leader, General I. A. Serov, chief of military intelligence, has also been ousted. Significantly both Serov and Zakharov had been friends of the executed spy, Colonel Oleg Penkovsky.

Neither Serov nor Zakharov, as far as can be ascertained, were implicated in passing on military secrets to a foreign country. But they do appear to have been a part of the general military opposition to the Khrushchev soft line of accommodation with the United States and his belief that the Marxist doctrine of the inevitability of war between capitalism and communism must be scrapped.

The Russian military have championed a big army and a big navy. Khrushchev has argued that both are out of date, that Russia must rely on long-range missiles, that the military budget must be pruned in favor of agriculture, housing and industry.

McNamara and President Kennedy have followed a somewhat similar line, have also clapped official censorship on statements by American admirals and generals regarding the probability of war.

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